

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE  
& COMMERCE

FISCAL YEAR 2022  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



Growing A Better Tomorrow





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# A Message from Commissioner Andy Gipson

As I travel the state, I often remark I believe the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) is the most important agency in Mississippi. Why? Because our work helps ensure access to quality food, fiber, and shelter. These necessities of life unite all Mississippians together. Every civilization's most basic need is food. Someone must grow, process, and distribute that food. As we make our food production more safe, more efficient, and more affordable, our society has more time, more capital, and more fuel for all our other cultural and economic endeavors.

Agriculture, the state's largest industry, remains the backbone of the economy and the lifeblood of rural communities throughout the state of Mississippi. This year, Mississippi farmers produced over \$9.7 billion in agricultural commodities. It is important we continue to grow Mississippi's agricultural economy by expanding and developing new marketing opportunities for our agricultural commodities. We must ensure our farmers and the ag industry can utilize the resources, technologies, capital, and tools that they need to be successful.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce touches the lives of all Mississippians, not just those directly involved in production agriculture. Your Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce works to ensure you get what you pay for at the gas pump and the grocery store, and you have access to a safe, affordable, and adequate food supply. During times of high inflation and high prices, Mississippians count on our consumer protection division to help guard every dollar.

I am proud of the Department's accomplishments this year. MDAC improved many of our program areas and implemented new strategies to assist consumers and the agriculture industry. We hosted the state's first timber inbound trade mission with participants from five countries, which generated over \$7 million in immediate sales from Mississippi timber companies. MDAC launched MS AgWorks, a new online employment portal dedicated to connecting Mississippi farmers and ranchers with potential employees. You can read more details about these and other MDAC initiatives in this 2022 Annual Report. As you read, I hope you gain a better understanding of the diverse role MDAC plays in promoting and supporting the agriculture industry in the state.

You can learn more about your Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce by visiting our website at [www.mdac.ms.gov](http://www.mdac.ms.gov).

Sincerely,



Andy Gipson, Commissioner



In addition to overseeing the responsibilities of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, duties of the Commissioner include leadership through service on the following boards:

- Mississippi Board of Animal Health
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Permit Board
- Mississippi Land, Water, and Timber Resources Board
- Mississippi Egg Marketing Board
- Southern U.S. Trade Association, President
- State Seed Board
- State Soil & Water Conservation Committee





# MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & COMMERCE

## Mission

The mission of MDAC is to support and apply necessary regulations to agricultural-related businesses within the state and to promote Mississippi's products throughout both the state and the rest of the world for the benefit of all Mississippi citizens.



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Jackson, MS 39201  
601-359-1100

Mississippi Agriculture  
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601-432-4500

Bureau of  
Plant Industry  
705 Stone Blvd  
Mississippi State,  
MS 39762  
662-325-3390

Mississippi Farmers  
Market  
929 High Street  
Jackson, MS 39202  
601-354-6573

Mississippi State  
Fairgrounds  
1207 Mississippi Street  
Jackson, MS 39202  
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Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce

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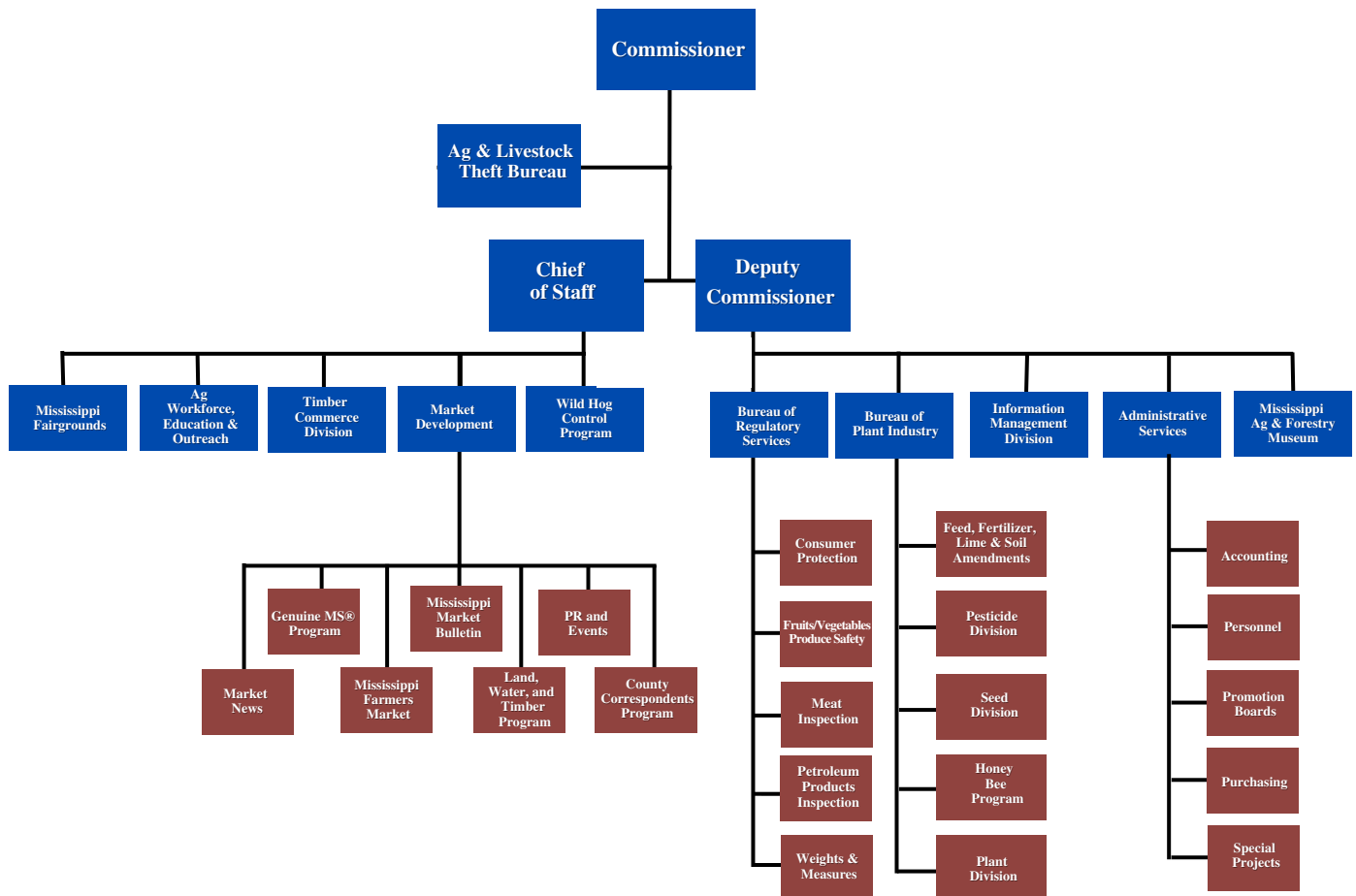
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# MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & COMMERCE



## MDAC Organizational Chart



Administration  
 Andy Gipson - Commissioner  
 Brian Perry - Chief of Staff  
 Ricky Luke - Deputy Commissioner



# Mississippi Agriculture Industry Overview

**\$9.7 billion\*** of crops and commodities produced in Mississippi in 2022

\*farm-gate value



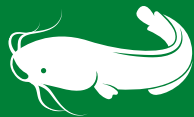
## FARMS

34,700 in Mississippi



## ACREAGE

10.4 Million  
farm acres  
in Mississippi



## CATFISH

35,100  
water acres  
in Mississippi

## FOREST

19.2 Million forest acres  
in Mississippi



## NATIONALLY

Mississippi ranks in the top  
25 nationally in 12 ag  
commodities



## WORKFORCE

17.4% of the state's workforce is  
employed by an industry directly  
or indirectly related to agriculture



### Mississippi Top 10

Mississippi's Top Commodities Based on Cash Receipts

<b>1. Broilers &amp; Eggs</b> \$3.8 Billion	<b>6. Cattle</b> \$456 Million
<b>2. Soybeans</b> \$1.8 Billion	<b>7. Catfish</b> \$258 Million
<b>3. Forestry</b> \$1.3 Billion	<b>8. Hay</b> \$164 Million
<b>4. Corn</b> \$631 Million	<b>9. Sweet Potatoes</b> \$112 Million
<b>5. Cotton</b> \$624 Million	<b>10. Specialty Crops</b> \$111 Million

Source: MSU Extension Service. (2022 Data)

### Mississippi Ag Exports

#### Top Trading Partners

1. China
2. Vietnam
3. Bangladesh
4. Pakistan
5. Mexico
6. Turkey
7. Canada

#### Top Traded Commodities

1. Cotton  
\$858 Million
2. Poultry Meat & Meat Products  
\$184 million
3. Forest Products  
\$159 Million
4. Other Feeds & Fodders  
\$27 Million
5. Rice  
\$23 Million

Source: USDA-Foreign Agricultural Service, Global Agricultural Trade System Online. (2021 Trade Data)



Mississippi ranks #1 in the U.S. in  
farm-raised catfish production



# Executive Summary

MDAC FY 2022 Annual Report (July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022)

The legislature tasks the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) to promote agriculture; to manage invasive species; to register and regulate pesticides, seeds and fertilizers; to ensure a fair marketplace in pricing and commercial scales; to inspect motor fuel; to protect the public's food supply; and to engage in additional state and federal regulatory roles. The mission of MDAC is to support and apply necessary regulations to agricultural-related businesses within the state and to promote Mississippi's products throughout both the state and the rest of the world for the benefit of all Mississippi citizens.

MDAC impacts the daily lives of all Mississippians. The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce ensures equity in the consumer marketplace by inspecting petroleum pumps at gas stations, checking food labels in grocery stores and retail establishments, and inspecting scales at weigh stations, stockyards, and railways. It supports the state's ag producers by promoting Mississippi products and developing marketing opportunities for these products. It protects farmers, ranchers, and ag producers statewide by investigating agriculture-related thefts and enforcing laws pertaining to agribusiness and livestock brands. During the past year alone, MDAC's Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB) investigated 222 cases with a reported value of over \$1,215,838 and recovered \$604,750 in stolen property. Through the efforts of the MALTB, Mississippians recouped livestock, farm equipment and timber profits illegally acquired from private lands.

MDAC's Bureau of Plant Industry and Bureau of Regulatory Services conducted inspections statewide to ensure compliance with state and federal laws. MDAC inspectors responded to consumer complaints, resulting in corrective action, education, and a return to compliance.

MDAC registered 15,500 pesticide products for sale; inspected more than 57,700 petroleum devices; tested more than 4,400 active weighing devices and scales; issued over 830 retail food establishment licenses; and inspected 31.4 million pounds of red meat and 64.2 million pounds of poultry this fiscal year.

The Department works diligently to support and grow Mississippi's agriculture industry. MDAC hosted an inbound trade mission and timber products showcase in partnership with the Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA). Timber buyers from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, United Kingdom, Spain, and Vietnam participated. The timber inbound international trade mission reported sales exceeding \$7 million with additional anticipated sales of \$6 million.

Through the agency's Market Development Division, more than \$400,000 was distributed through grant funds provided by the United States Department of Agriculture. The Market Development Division also manages several promotional programs specifically designed to increase awareness of Mississippi's ag products and agricultural-related businesses. International trade, farm-to-school, agritourism and farmers market registries, livestock and grain market news, online market portals, and other outreach efforts remain a focus for the agency. Part of these efforts include expanding the Genuine MS® program and the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*.

Working closely with each division at MDAC, the Information Management Division (IMD) plays a critical role by both providing technical support to agency employees and data and information to the public. Through online webpages, social media applications and drone and photography services, IMD ensures important information is readily available to the public on behalf of the agency and its branches including the Mississippi State Fairgrounds and Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum. This vital service provides a direct line of communication between the consumer and local farmer to one of the largest agencies in the state.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce's 219 employees work from offices in Jackson, at Mississippi State University, at Alcorn State University, in Sardis, in Biloxi, and on-the-road to promote Mississippi agriculture and protect Mississippi's markets to ensure fair commerce.





# Market Development

***The Market Development Division promotes Mississippi agriculture and the state's agricultural products across the state, nation, and world.***

The Market Development Division is dedicated to promoting Mississippi's agriculture commodities and the farmers and ranchers who produce them. This is accomplished through participation in trade shows, conferences and fairs, international trade, presentations to schools and civic organizations, promotion of local farmers markets, connecting with other agricultural organizations and commodity groups, and various other communication outlets. The Market Development Division consists of three main program areas: communications/outreach, market development programs, and grants and cost-share programs.

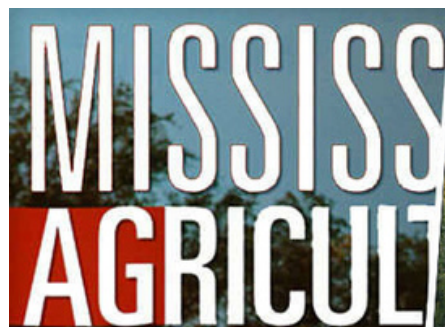
## **Communications/Outreach**

The Market Development Division serves as the communications and outreach arm of the Department and is responsible for media and public relations. Communication to the public is done through social media, press releases, and various publications including the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, *Mississippi Agriculture* magazine, the MDAC Ag Matters e-newsletter, and Livestock and Grain Marketing News.

The Market Development Division publishes the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, a buy/sell newspaper for farmers to advertise farm and agricultural items such as equipment, land, and livestock. *The Mississippi Market Bulletin* is a semi-monthly publication, published on the 1st and 15th of each month, with a circulation of over 35,000 in-state and out-of-state subscribers.

The Division partners with Farm Flavor Media to publish and distribute 15,000 copies of *Mississippi Agriculture*, an annual magazine that tells the stories of Mississippi's agriculture industry to educate the public on the importance of the state's largest industry.

In 2022, MDAC began publishing a monthly e-newsletter, MDAC Ag Matters, to inform the public of happenings within the Department and the agriculture industry.



**MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE -  
A GUIDE TO THE STATE'S  
FARMS, FOODS, AND  
COMMERCE**

**Discover Mississippi agriculture  
from the perspective of those that  
live it each day.**



# Market Development Continued

Livestock and Grain Market News reports are released daily through a federal/state cooperative agreement with USDA. Eight cross-trained Mississippi Board of Animal Health personnel report prices from fourteen livestock auction markets. Prices collected from the fourteen auctions represent 85 percent of all the livestock markets throughout the state. Livestock and grain pricing is collected and disseminated through the USDA and MDAC websites and the radio five days a week. These prices are used by lending institutions, university agricultural economists, consultants, and livestock associations.



## **Market Development Programs**

The primary focus of the Market Development Division is the promotion of Mississippi agricultural products statewide, nationwide, and worldwide, in order to increase the purchase and consumption of products that are grown, raised, crafted, and made in the state. MDAC administers several programs that promote and create marketing opportunities for Mississippi's agricultural products.

### **Mississippi Farm Marketplace**

The Mississippi Farm Marketplace is an online market portal that gives farmers a place to list commodities they have for sale, while providing consumers a location to easily source local products. The portal can be accessed at [MSFarmMarketplace.com](http://MSFarmMarketplace.com), where commodities such as produce, meats, dairy products, honey, live animals for custom slaughter, eggs, aquaculture, seafood, and horticulture products can be located. The portal also contains a listing of available on-farm jobs.



### **Agritourism Limited Liability Registration Program**

MDAC's Agritourism Limited Liability Registration Program provides limited liability and promotion to farms engaged in agritourism activities. MDAC registered 78 agritourism operations in the state in 2022.

### **Certified Farmers Market Program**

MDAC administers the Certified Farmers Market Program to promote farmers markets in the state with Mississippi farmers selling Mississippi produce and other agricultural products. MDAC certified 22 markets in 2022.





# Market Development Continued

## Farm-to-School

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce partners with the Mississippi Department of Education to promote the purchase of Mississippi-grown fruits and vegetables for the Department of Defense (DoD) Farm-to-School Program. During the 2021-2022 school year, \$456,624.44 of Mississippi produce items were purchased by schools across the state, an increase of nearly 25 percent from the previous year. MDAC has partnered with the Bower Foundation to reimburse farmers for the freezing and storage costs of fresh-frozen produce purchased through the program. For every \$1 that the Bower Foundation invests in the program, \$39 of Mississippi grown fresh-frozen fruits and vegetables are purchased and served to students across Mississippi. Farmers participating in the Farm-to-School Program utilized the Revolving Fund Program to receive their produce payments within five days of delivery.



## International Trade

MDAC works to create international marketing opportunities for Mississippi's farmers and agribusinesses through meetings with international delegations, participation in trade activities, and program offerings through the Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA). MDAC collaborates with other state and federal agencies to deliver accurate information to companies interested in exporting through site visits, seminars, research, and providing potential trade leads and opportunities.

MDAC staff met with the General Consul of Japan and the Deputy Consul General of Great Britain to discuss trade opportunities. Commissioner Gipson and MDAC staff met with a delegation from Taiwan to discuss commodities for potential trade opportunities.

MDAC is an active member of SUSTA. MDAC staff serve as liaisons for SUSTA to promote opportunities available for Mississippi agriculture and value-added products, in addition to serving as activity managers for trade shows and missions.

MDAC staff coordinated the Japan Virtual Trade Mission and managed the SUSTA pavilion at the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York City. MDAC hosted an international trade seminar in Biloxi resulting in the training of 31 participants representing nine businesses.

Three Mississippi companies participated in SUSTA's cost-share program to explore new markets. Four Mississippi companies participated in SUSTA's global event activities. As a result, twenty-eight buyer connections were made, and actual export sales of \$3.1 million were realized with projected export sales of \$3.6 million.

# Market Development Continued

## **Grants and Cost-Share Programs**

The Market Development Division offers grant and cost-share programs to assist farmers and agribusinesses. Funding for these programs is made available through USDA rather than state funds.

### **Specialty Crop Block Grant**

Through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Program, MDAC was awarded \$425,800.19 in farm bill funding and \$565,454.88 in stimulus funding. MDAC granted \$425,800.19 to organizations to enhance the state's specialty crop industry, a nearly 25 percent increase from last year. MDAC awarded twelve projects to universities and producer organizations to administer promotional efforts, educational workshops, and research projects in areas specifically related to sweet potatoes, blueberries, tomatoes, Christmas trees, cucumbers, turf grass, and various other fruit and vegetable crops. MDAC has thirty-eight projects currently ongoing.

### **GAP/GHP Cost-Share Program**

MDAC administers the Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) Cost-Share Program. This program reimburses farmers for 75 percent, up to \$750, of the cost incurred to obtain the GAP/GHP food safety certification. MDAC granted twenty-three reimbursements. This program is funded by the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

### **Organic Cost-Share Program**

MDAC offers the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program which reimburses farmers for 50 percent, up to \$500, of the costs incurred to obtain the certification. One farm received reimbursement. This program is funded through the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

### **Growing Lunch School Garden Grant Program**

MDAC continued the successful Growing Lunch School Garden Grant Program funded through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Program. This program provides grants in an amount up to \$500 to schools interested in building a school garden. Eight schools participated during fiscal year 2022. MDAC has awarded 78 grants since 2014, when the program was established.

### **Let's Plant Community Garden Grant**

MDAC established the Let's Plant Community Garden Grant Program through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program for communities interested in creating or expanding a community garden. MDAC awarded five community garden grants in fiscal year 2022.

- Funds awarded to organizations to promote the specialty crop industry: \$425,800.19 to implement 12 projects.
- Farms/Agribusiness assisted through Market Development Department Programs/Activities:
  - Agritourism Limited Liability Program: 78
  - GAP/GHP Cost-Share Program: 23
  - National Organic Cost-Share Program: 1
  - Farm-to-School Program: 8
  - Farmers Market Certification Program: 22
  - Garden Grant Programs: 13
  - MS Farm Marketplace: 397
  - Specialty Crop Block Grant Program: 38
  - Farmers Market Manager Workshop: 65
  - Certificates of Free Sale issued: 12



Director  
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# Genuine MS® Program

*Genuine MS® identifies and promotes products proudly created or produced by Mississippi farmers, artisans, entrepreneurs, and manufacturers.*

The purpose of the Genuine MS® program is to increase public awareness of Mississippi's farm, food, crafted, and fabricated products. The website, [GenuineMS.com](http://GenuineMS.com), serves as a centralized location featuring members' products, while connecting consumers across the globe with the people and places that grow, raise, craft, and make Genuine MS® products. The program provides a platform for members to share their unique stories in an effort to increase consumer awareness of their products. Genuine MS® shows state pride and keeps the economy strong.

# GENUINE MS®

There are four classifications of membership determined by members' products in the Genuine MS® program — Grown, Raised, Crafted, and Made. The Genuine MS® Grown classification consists of farmers who grow everything from produce, nuts, and row crops to horticulture and timber in Mississippi. The Genuine MS® Raised classification consists of farmers, ranchers, and aquaculturists with animals and aquaculture products raised in Mississippi or those selling products from animals and aquaculture products raised in Mississippi. The Genuine MS® Crafted classification consists of craftspeople whose products are hand-created in Mississippi from agricultural products, which includes specialty foods and beverages and pet and artisan products. The Genuine MS® Made classification consists of manufacturers whose products are 51 percent or more manufactured in Mississippi to benefit agriculture.



Expansion of retail opportunities for Genuine MS® products was a focus in 2022. Genuine MS® partnered with 11 independently-owned retail grocery stores to display shelf labeling identifying Genuine MS® products.

The Genuine MS® Store, located inside of the Mississippi Farmers Market, installed a freezer which expanded product availability of frozen food items including meats, catfish, tamales, pies, and blueberries. Twenty products from nine producers were added to the Store as a result.



Pop-up Store opportunities have continued to expand in 2022, leading to the participation in four events, up from two in the previous year. Twenty-nine producers representing 95 products were at the first Genuine MS® Pop-Up Store at the State Fair in 2020. Today, the Genuine MS® Pop-Up Store and Retail Store represent 57 producers and over 600 products.



# Genuine MS® Program Continued

Genuine MS® launched an online store with four initial gift box options designed for corporate and holiday gifts: Mississippi MOJO featuring coffees, tea, and honey; Mississippi Griller containing seasonings, sauces, and marinade; Mississippi Snack Pack with popcorn, cheese straws, cookies, pecans, and other snacks; and the Mississippi Sampler of rice, grits, gumbo mix, and other products. All selections come from Genuine MS® members and are grown, raised, crafted, or made in Mississippi. The gift boxes range from \$38 to \$100 each depending on the selection. In the future, the online store will also feature individual products.



@genuinems



@genuinems



Genuine MS



- Genuine MS® Members: 320
- New members in 2022: 61
- Events held with Genuine MS® Pop-Up Store: 4
- Genuine MS® Store transactions: 10,315 grossing over \$50,000.
- Genuine MS® Store and Pop-Up Store sales increased by 84%.
- Genuine MS® Pop-Up Store at Mississippi State Fair sales doubled from 2020 to 2021.
- Promotional Efforts: Genuine MS® has continued to stay active in promoting the brand across the state. The program participated in an expo, convention, or tradeshow every month, oftentimes three per month.

Director  
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# Mississippi Farmers Market



*The Mississippi Farmers Market provides a location for Mississippi farmers to sell their locally-grown and produced agricultural products direct to the public.*

The Mississippi Legislature created the Mississippi Farmers Market to provide a facility for the efficient handling of farm products in the interest of the farmer, consumer, general public, and the State of Mississippi. The 18,000-square foot facility serves as a central location for farmers, specialty food makers, and local artisans to sell their agricultural goods and wares. The Market provides farmers with additional marketing opportunities, while increasing consumers' access to fruits, vegetables, and other farm-raised products. The Mississippi Farmers Market is open on Saturdays year-round and Thursdays during the peak produce season.

The Mississippi Farmers Market participates in two USDA Farmers Market Nutrition Programs: the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. These programs provide vouchers to eligible WIC participants and senior citizens to shop at the Market.

The Mississippi Farmers Market offers a café which provides breakfast and lunch six days per week. The Market serves as the location of the Genuine MS® Store which is open three days per week. The Farmers Market is rented for private events.

- Vendors certified to sell at market: 80
- Average number of vendors weekly: 36
- Increase in number of seasonal events: 50%
- Shoppers: 20,000 annually



@msfarmersmarket



@msfarmersmarket



Mississippi Farmers Market

## Manager

Patrick Duckworth  
FarmersMarket@mdac.ms.gov



# Country Correspondents Program



The program is divided into five regions. Each region has one MDAC staff member that provides status updates to the central office in Jackson.

## MDAC County Correspondents Program

The County Correspondents Program ensures the flow of information on current issues to and from the agency and local farmers in each county in a timely manner. The program designates farmers from every Mississippi county to serve as County Correspondents. Each correspondent communicates with MDAC on issues affecting their local jurisdiction.

An MDAC staff member is assigned to each of the five county correspondent regions. The assigned staff member works closely with the 98 County Correspondents within their region. This year the staff members represented MDAC at six statewide events.



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# Timber Commerce

*The Timber Commerce Division actively engages with state agencies and the private sector to promote the Mississippi timber industry internationally and domestically. The Timber Commerce Division works with experts on infrastructure, supply chain, and transportation solutions to benefit the timber industry.*

## **International Timber Promotions**

MDAC hosted an inbound trade mission in June 2022 in partnership with the Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA). Timber buyers from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, United Kingdom, Spain, and Vietnam participated. The trade delegation toured two lumber companies and a nursery providing insights into Mississippi's timber industry from seedling to sawmill. The tours included demonstrations from harvesting outfits as well as transloading facilities of hardwoods and southern yellow pine softwoods, which exhibited the extensive capacity and sustainability of Mississippi timber.

The first-ever Mississippi Timber Products Showcase was held in conjunction with the inbound mission. During the showcase, the international trade delegates held business to business meetings and visited with Mississippi timber exporters from around the state. Stakeholders included one railroad company, three ports, state and federal agencies, and six timber producers. The inbound trade mission and showcase was funded by USDA-Foreign Agricultural Service.

The Timber Commerce Division worked with SUSTA to gain approval from USDA to market any wood species and any wood product through the SUSTA international trade programs. Prior to this request, only Southern Yellow Pine Logs were allowed to be marketed under this program.





# Timber Commerce Continued

## Domestic Timber Promotions

The Timber Commerce Division developed a timber resource portfolio to provide an overview of the Mississippi timber industry. The portfolio contains maps detailing the locations of mills, the status of mills (open, closed, idle, or announced), the products produced at each mill, and, when available, the production volume and number of green tons produced at each mill.

In order to highlight the sustainability of Mississippi's timber industry, the portfolio includes maps with the green tons by county and the percentage of forested area in each county. The Division is developing transportation maps to explore solutions for a freight plan to move timber and agriculture goods, while incorporating economic development opportunities. The timber resource portfolio, the updated timber booklet, and the upcoming transportation mapping will be added to the website in fiscal year 2023.

- The timber inbound international trade mission and the Mississippi Timber Products Showcase reported sales exceeding **\$7 million** with additional anticipated sales of **\$6 million**.



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# Agriculture Workforce Education, Outreach, and Development

*Agriculture Workforce Education, Outreach, and Development works with schools and universities, agriculture organizations, and government partners to grow the agricultural workforce and connect it to employers.*

The Agriculture Workforce Education, Outreach, and Development Program assists the agriculture industry in meeting employment demands of Mississippi's agriculture workforce and creates a pipeline of quality educational and training opportunities for high school and college students pursuing a career in agriculture. The program partners with Mississippi agribusinesses, industries, agricultural youth development organizations, and educational institutions to increase the number of qualified applicants for agricultural jobs. The MDAC internship program is also facilitated through this Division.



## **MS AgWorks**

The Workforce Development Division created a new online portal called MS AgWorks that allows agricultural employers to post job positions and job seekers to submit resumes.

## **Mental Health in Agriculture**

In 2021, the Agriculture Workforce Education, Outreach, and Development Program partnered with the Mississippi State University Extension Service through a USDA-NIFA grant to create an awareness of services available to farmers and farm families regarding stress management, farm safety, and the importance of mental health. Through the partnership, MDAC has been able to promote mental health awareness among farming communities through a documentary called "On the Farm," which highlights the mental health challenges of four farmers. Research has also been conducted through the grant to assess the number of farm-related accidents in Mississippi each year and to find new ways to reach farmers and farm families who may be in mental distress.

## **Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council**

MDAC completed the first cohort of the Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council (MAYC), comprised of 12 high school seniors from across the state and selected the second group for the 2022-2023 year. The first group of MAYC members had an opportunity to volunteer at various MDAC events, tour a variety of agricultural businesses and learn about advocacy, communications and the legislative process related to Mississippi's agriculture industry.



**Commissioner Gipson shared a meal and discussed agricultural careers with the 2021 Ag Youth Council.**

# Agriculture Workforce Education, Outreach, and Development

Continued



## 2021 Ag Expo

The program facilitated the 2021 Mississippi State Fair Ag Expo in the Mississippi Trade Mart during the 162nd Mississippi State Fair. The Expo included agricultural exhibits, educational exhibits, interactive activities with the FARMtastic program, vendors, entertainment, and an antique car show. The Expo also featured FFA and 4-H competitive events and student exhibits. More than 40,000 people attended the Expo.

## Mississippi Youth Trapping Corps

The program partnered with MDAC's Wild Hog Control Program, along with Wildlife Dominion, to create and facilitate the Mississippi Youth Trapping Corps. This youth program partners with high school agricultural education programs and FFA chapters to start their own trapping program in their local community.

- Assisted with the 2022 Mississippi FFA Legislative Luncheon, serving lunch to more than 750 FFA members, teachers, and legislative guests in the Mississippi Trade Mart.
- Attended the Holtzclaw Farmer's Conference and Expo in Utica, and spoke to the progress of Mississippi agriculture to over 100 guests.
- Career fairs attended at community college and high schools: 10
- Exhibited at the Mississippi FFA Convention Career Show.

## Rodeo Days

MDAC hosted the first annual Dixie National "Rodeo Days" Expo in the Mississippi Trade Mart during the second weekend of the Dixie National Rodeo in February 2022. The Expo featured agricultural literacy exhibits provided by Mississippi State Extension's FARMtastic program, rodeo personalities, educational and recruitment exhibits from our educational partners, shopping, and 4-H and FFA competitive events.



## MDAC Internship Program

The MDAC Internship Program employed eight interns to work throughout the Department. Four law school students served in the legal department, human resources, and other divisions during the spring semester and summer terms. The FFA Internship Program dedicated a Mississippi FFA State Officer to work in the Department from August to May, working in the Agriculture Workforce Education, Outreach, and Development Division. The Wild Hog Control Program hired an intern through funds from the MSU Extension/NRCS Service-Learning Summer Program. And through a separate USDA-NRCS grant, the Department hired two seasonal interns for the Grazing Lands Project and the High Tunnel Education Project.

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# Farmers Market Nutrition Program

*Farmers Market Nutrition Programs provide benefits for eligible individuals to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables which increases access to healthy produce, while creating marketing opportunities for farmers.*

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce coordinates two USDA-funded supplemental nutrition programs that benefit fruit and vegetable growers and eligible Women, Infants, and Children's (WIC) program participants and low-income senior citizens in select communities of Mississippi. The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program provide benefits in the form of checks for nutritionally at-risk Mississippi residents to redeem at authorized farmers markets in the state.

- Farmers markets participating in the WIC FMNP: 15 farmers markets and 2 farm stands
- Farmers markets authorized to participate in the Senior FMNP: 28
- Farmers authorized to participate: 150
- Low-income Mississippi residents receiving FMNP (WIC and Senior) checks to redeem at participating farmers markets: 8,100+
- Value of vouchers redeemed in both programs: \$131,300+



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# Wild Hog Control Program

*The Wild Hog Control Program (WHCP) offers "smart" traps to land managers for the control of wild hogs on private agricultural and forestry lands in Mississippi.*

Wild hogs cause more than \$60 million in property damage in the state each year with substantial damage to row crops, pastures, and forestlands. The Wild Hog Control Program uses traps to help control this problem. Traps are deployed in concentrated focal areas across the state. Focal areas are determined by MDAC through an application process. MDAC provides the training necessary to use the “smart” traps and technical guidance regarding the most effective methods to trap and control wild hogs on private lands.

Submitted applications are evaluated based on the number of acres available for trapping, historical agricultural losses caused by wild hogs on the property, and current trapping efforts on the property. A cooperative application is encouraged for small acreage. Adjoining land managers of small parcels should work together to submit one application. Traps are available for one-month intervals, dependent upon use and success. One trap per 500 acres is recommended, depending on landscape and land use.

- Application periods opened to the public for submission of trap applications: 4
- Available traps: 24 for each application period
- Wild hogs captured: 845 on 45 properties in 33 counties
- An additional Nuisance Wildlife Specialist was hired during fiscal year 2022 to coordinate trapping activities in North Mississippi. The program now has a North Region Nuisance Wildlife Specialist and a South Region Nuisance Wildlife Specialist.
- WHCP staff assisted USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services in obtaining biological samples from wild hogs for disease surveillance.
- WHCP staff provided information regarding wild hog management at various public meetings and events across the state.



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# Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau

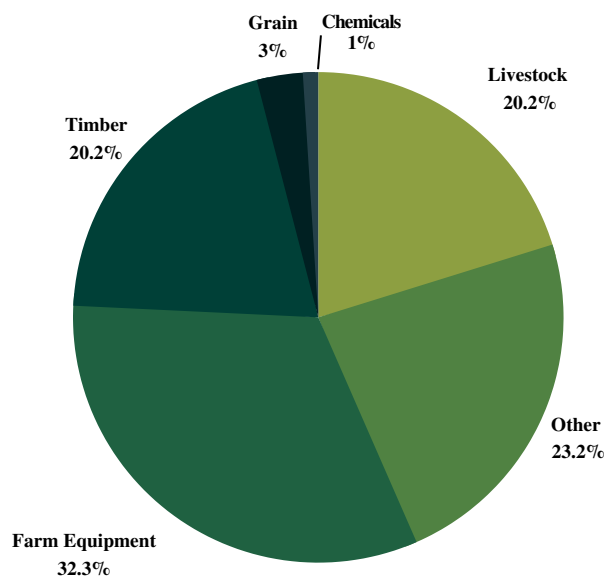
*The Mississippi Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau assists in the investigation of farm and agriculture-related crimes.*

The Mississippi Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB) enforces all state laws pertaining to the theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment, chemicals, timber, and other farm or agriculture-related crimes. The Bureau consists of eleven investigators. The Bureau is also responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all persons who violate any of the laws administered by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

In addition to its law enforcement function, MALTB maintains registration of all livestock brands. Branding is not required for livestock in Mississippi. However, if livestock are branded, the brand must be registered. The brands are recorded for a five-year period at a cost of five dollars. Registered brands are published in book form and distributed to law enforcement members throughout the state.



**Percentage Distribution of Dollar Value of Reported Crimes**



- Cases investigated: 222 cases with reported property value of \$1,215,838
- Cases cleared: 110 cases with recovered property value of \$604,750
- Recovery rate: 51%
- Brands issued: 1,640 brands which generated approximately \$8,200 over a five year period



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# Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum

*The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum tells the story of Mississippi's agricultural history through indoor and outdoor exhibits and events.*

The mission of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum is to create an environment that communicates the value of past and present Mississippi agricultural lifestyles, relationships, and practices and their relevance to the future of all people. The Museum consists of multiple exhibits including Small Town, Mississippi, a train exhibit featuring several gauges of trains, and a nature trail. The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum is home to the Bisland Cotton Gin, America's oldest working cotton gin, and the National Agricultural Aviation Museum.

## **Highlight of Annual Events**

Mississippi Science Fest - September 16-18, 2021

Attendance: 3,000

- Students and adults attending the festival listened to presenters including groups from Mississippi State University Engineering Departments, 4-H, MSU Extension, agricultural associations, and STEM-based private businesses.

October Pumpkin Adventure - October 6-9, 13-16 & 20-23, 2021

Attendance: 7,900

- This event included a hayride tour of gardens and Small Town, Mississippi, a walk around the Museum, and a pumpkin to take home.

Harvest Festival - November 9-13, 2021

Attendance: 3,993

- This educational event consisted of demonstrations at the sawmill, cane mill, print shop, blacksmith shop, and grist mill. The Bisland Cotton Gin ginned multiple bales of cotton for visitors. The event also featured hit-and-miss engines, bluegrass music, antique tractors, and live demonstrations by interpreters at the Fortenberry-Parkman Farmstead.

Homestead for the Holidays - December 9-10, 2021

Attendance: 1,600

- This event was sponsored by the Mississippi Egg Marketing Board, the Mississippi Beef Council, and the Mississippi Loggers Association. Guests were treated to wagon and train rides, Small Town in Lights, story time with Mrs. Claus, live music, and breakfast for dinner.

Spring Farm Days - March 4-6, 2022

Attendance: 1,900

- This event offered the opportunity for visitors to see tractor and blacksmith demonstrations and tour the Fortenberry-Parkman Farmstead over a three-day period.

The Mississippi Egg Marketing Board's Annual Easter Egg Hunt - April 3, 2022

Attendance: 1,319

- Guests walked down the rabbit trail that meandered throughout the entire Museum grounds while collecting Easter eggs.





# Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum

Continued

Mississippi Pickle Fest - June 11, 2022

Attendance: 3,705

- The 3rd annual event consisted of live music, pickle eating contest, and pickle jar packing contest. Over 80 vendors were available along with food trucks, water slides, and games throughout the grounds. Mississippi Tourism Association named this event as winner of “Small Festival of the Year 2022” at the Governor’s Tourism Conference in Tunica, Mississippi.



## New Projects

The Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration provided nearly \$600,000 to the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum for the repair and restoration of up to four rental facilities on campus. However, due to damage sustained during the 2021 ice storm, the entirety of the funds will be utilized for repairs on the Ethnic Heritage Center.

The Museum completed construction of an enclosed structure attached to the General Store to house a walk-in cooler/freezer and a new meat smoker. Utilizing this improvement, the Museum now offers to visitors for purchase daily smoked meats, holiday treats and casseroles, and a new line of jarred goods through the General Store. This revenue generating project also enables the Museum to offer sack lunches for school field trips.

To improve safety and the overall aesthetic, the Museum installed new sidewalks throughout Small Town and resurfaced the roads with limestone gravel. The Dairy Alliance provided \$5,000 to complete the Dairy Exhibit. Renovations are underway for the new Oil Derrick display. And the Museum has begun improvements to lighting and audio-visual technology in rental venues including the Sparkman, Forestry, and Education Center.

Magnolia Gardens, the successor program to the Avenue of Magnolias, completed its first feature garden including lighted pathways, water features, and a Magnolia tree lined boulevard. This initiative honors and memorializes loved ones with a living legacy which can be visited at the Agriculture and Forestry Museum.



- Annual visitors to the Ag Museum: 100,000+
- Annual events hosted: 7
- Private events held at the Ag Museum: 332



@msagmuseum



@msagmuseum



Mississippi Agriculture and Aviation Museum

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# Mississippi State Fairgrounds

*The Mississippi State Fairgrounds provides a venue to promote agriculture, industry, and entertainment for Mississippians.*

The Mississippi State Fairgrounds strives to create a safe and exciting environment for all to experience agriculture, enjoy entertainment, and be an integral part of the economic impact and family-friendly atmosphere of the capital city. The Mississippi Fairgrounds Complex covers over 100 acres with a mile-long midway. The Fairgrounds consists of the Mississippi Coliseum, the new Mississippi Trade Mart, Kirk Fordice Equine Center, 14 livestock barns, and space to park more than 7,000 vehicles. The Fairgrounds provides a venue for a number of livestock and horse shows, concerts, exhibitions, trade shows, and various competitions. Two popular annual events held at the Fairgrounds annually are the Junior League of Jackson's Mistletoe Marketplace and Comic-Con.



## Highlights of Annual Events:

Mississippi State Fair - October 6-17, 2021

Attendance: 600,000+

- Fairgoers enjoyed timeless traditions of livestock shows, the petting zoo, pig races, and all the fan-favorite foods. The Mississippi State Fair also added a new area called Frontier Village with many attractions, such as, West Texas Rattlesnake Show and Tumbleweed Crossing.

Dixie National Rodeo and Livestock Show

January 22 - February 21, 2022

Attendance: 50,000+ attended Rodeo

- The Fairgrounds hosted this 57th annual event. The largest rodeo east of the Mississippi River was met with record breaking ticket sales exceeding \$1 million. The Fairgrounds continued the Dixie National Rodeo Days and the Dixie National Steakhouse in the Trade Mart.

Mudbug Festival - April 27 - May 1, 2022

Attendance: 40,000+

- This 2nd annual Mississippi five-day outdoor event promoted the crawfish industry, provided musical entertainment and featured rides from North American Midway Entertainment. Following criminal activity on the fourth day of the festival which was promptly neutralized by law enforcement and Fairgrounds security, the fifth day of the Festival was canceled.





# Mississippi State Fairgrounds Continued

## New Projects

In September 2021, the Fairgrounds completed a \$1.4 million renovation project in the Kirk Fordice Equine Center.

The Fairgrounds completed the new 900+ space parking lot on the site of the demolished old Trade Mart in October 2021.

In February 2022, less than a year after the City of Jackson's water system failed during an ice storm, the Fairgrounds completed a 740-foot deep water well which, along with the pressurized treatment tank and new piping, provides clean, reliable water to the entire Fairgrounds complex independent of the city's water system.

The State of Mississippi acquired property on Greymont Street bordering the Fairgrounds including the old Denner's Restaurant and the Oyo Hotel. The Legislature designated the land to the benefit of the Fairgrounds with both lots scheduled for demolition and turned to parking in fiscal year 2023.

The \$1 million Coliseum dressing rooms project continued throughout the year with completion scheduled in fiscal year 2023.

Fairground's leadership and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History began conversations and strategies to utilize the Hinds County Armory on the Fairgrounds as a security command center beginning in fiscal year 2023 with additional renovation and restoration plans following those initial improvements.

**Built in 1927, the Hinds County Armory is the oldest surviving armory in the state of Mississippi.**




**Commissioner Gipson pours the first drink of fresh well-water, ensuring the water is safe for the public.**


- Annual visitors to the Mississippi State Fairgrounds: 1.5 Million+
- Economic Impact of Mississippi State Fair: \$40 Million (Study conducted by Jackson State University)
- The 2021 Mississippi State Fair was named #15 of the Top 50 Fairs in North America by Carnival Warehouse.
- Record ticket sales for 2022 Dixie National Rodeo: \$1 Million with attendance over 50,000


## Events held at Mississippi State Fairgrounds:


- Equine events: 24
- Livestock: 8
- Trade: 25
- Entertainment/Concerts: 20
- Private events: 15
- MDAC hosted events: 8

 @mississippifairgrounds

 @mississippifairgrounds

 Mississippi State Fairgrounds

 @dixienationalrodeo

 @dixienationalrodeo

 Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo

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 MISSISSIPPI STATE  
**FAIRGROUNDS**



# Bureau of Plant Industry

**Plant Pest Programs - Pesticide Program - Seed Program and State Seed Laboratory  
Feed, Fertilizer, Lime, and Soil Program**

*The Bureau of Plant Industry protects the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from harmful insects, diseases, and weeds.*

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) is a regulatory and service division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. BPI serves as the Plant Protection and Quarantine Division of the agency. BPI administers 31 programs pertaining to agricultural aviation, pesticides, plant pests, honey bees, seed, animal feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil/plant amendments. Additionally, the Bureau maintains cooperative agreements with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in administration and enforcement of state and federal laws. BPI is also designated by the federal government as the state agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

BPI provided updates and training material for the following groups and/or events: Fall Flower and Garden Fest in Crystal Springs, Mississippi Agricultural Aviation Association Convention, and Pesticide Recertification Trainings at the: Panola County Extension Office, Coastal Research and Extension Center, Forrest County Extension Office, Central MS Research and Extension Center, Delta Research and Extension Center, North MS Research and Extension Center, Annual Mississippi Pest Control Association Meeting, Mississippi Vegetation Management Association, Mississippi Rice Council, Nursery and Landscape Association, Mississippi Entomological Association, Mississippi State University's Row Crop Short Course, Mississippi State University's Crop College, and Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation's Agricultural Consultants Meeting.



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# Plant Pest Programs

*The Bureau of Plant Industry's Plant Pest Programs protect the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from the introduction and spread of injurious insects and plant diseases within the state.*

Under the provisions of the Mississippi Plant Act, the Bureau carries out plant pest programs designed to prevent the spread of destructive insects, diseases, and other pests when plant material, machinery, and carriers are transported. These programs include inspection, certification, quarantine, and survey activities.

The Bureau implemented a Cogongrass control program. Cogongrass is considered one of the worst invasive weeds in the world and can be found in most counties in Mississippi. Control in many areas has become a difficult and expensive battle for landowners and livestock producers. Through federal funding, the Bureau provides herbicide to landowners to control this weed.

- Nurseries and nursery dealers certified: 981
- Nursery and nursery dealer inspections: 1,280
- Phytosanitary certificates issued for plant material and seed export: 410

#### Visual surveys conducted:

- Soybeans: 30 surveys in 30 soybean production fields in 24 counties
- Corn: 31 surveys in 12 production fields
- Cotton: 32 surveys in 97 cotton production fields in 5 counties
- Rice: 46 surveys in 17 rice production fields

#### Other services:

- Samples tested for bacterial matter: 36 in five counties
- Number of location traps set for Exotic Bark Beetle: 15 within Lowndes, Oktibbeha, and Clay Counties
- Total traps set and screened for exotic species: 1,515
- Total traps set at lumber mills and furniture manufacturers for the Sirex Woodwasp placed: 6 in 6 counties
- Commercial sweet potato businesses served: 45 operated by 64 growers
- Acres of sweet potatoes with no positive Sweet Potato Weevil detection monitored: 28,158
- Colonies of honeybees certified and inspected: 50,949
- Bee colonies permitted into Mississippi: 34,440

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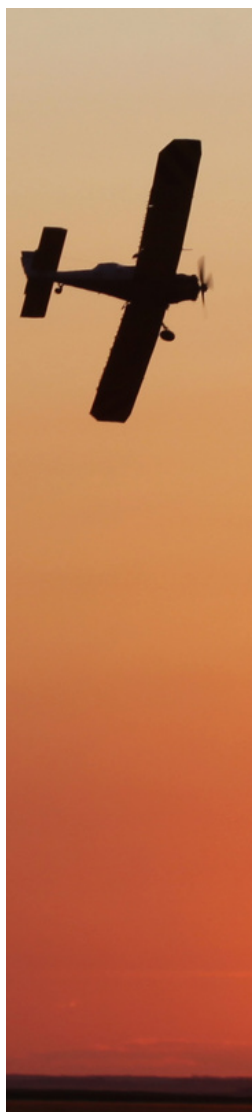


# Pesticide Program

*The Pesticide Program protects the agriculture industry through the registration of pesticide products, regulation of purchasing and application of pesticides, and regulation and licensing of aerial applicators.*

Under the provisions of the Mississippi Pesticide Law, the Bureau of Plant Industry carries out various activities to register and inspect pesticide products, administers special types of pesticide registrations and exemptions, licenses dealers of restricted-use pesticides, and conducts activities protecting the general public and the environment from possible pesticide contamination and misuse.

BPI has continued its efforts implementing the Mississippi Honeybee Stewardship Program. The program promotes awareness, communication, and education between beekeepers and farmers. This program was developed through a joint effort between the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation, Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Mississippi Beekeepers Association, Mississippi Agricultural Aviation Association, Mississippi State University Extension Service, Mississippi Agricultural Consultants Association, Mississippi Agricultural Industry Council, and row crop farmers.



- Pesticide products registered for sale in the State of Mississippi: 15,500
- Samples collected from products available at retail and distribution outlets to check compliance with state and federal pesticide laws: 384
- Stop-sale orders issued on pesticide products found to be deficient, misbranded, and non-registered: 5
- Special-use registrations (Section 24c of FIFRA) issued on pesticide products: 4
- Emergency exemptions (Section 18 of FIFRA) issued on pesticide products: 2
- Dealers licensed to sell restricted use pesticide products: 309
- Registered technician identification cards issued to persons engaged in professional services such as pest control and weed control services: 2,048
- Licenses and permits issued to persons engaged in professional services: 1,161
- Aerial licenses issued for agricultural purposes:
  - Agricultural aviation pilots: 213
  - Applicators: 89
  - Aircrafts: 179
- Pest management consultants licenses issued: 186
- Private applicator certificates issued: 2,204
- Commercial applicator certificates issued: 590
- Horticulturist licenses issued: 113
- Tree surgeons licenses issued: 115



# Pesticide Program

Continued

- Inspections conducted:
  - Producer-establishment inspections: 23
  - Marketplace inspections: 695
  - Applicator records inspections: 626
  - RUP dealer records inspections: 198
  - Container/containment inspections: 25
  - Non-agricultural/for cause inspections of pesticide misuse: 7
  - Agricultural/for cause inspections of pesticide misuse: 18
  - Non-agricultural inspections of pesticide use: 1,568
  - Agricultural inspections of pesticide use: 59
  - Worker protection inspections: 30
- Samples collected under the Pesticide Enforcement Program: 88
- MDAC's Waste Disposal Program has played an important role in environmental protection by offering farmers and landowners a safe way to dispose of pesticides to help reduce risks associated with pesticide waste disposal. Pounds of waste pesticide products for disposal collected: 24,820
- MDAC continues to support the Mississippi State University Extension Termite University to conduct training and recertification.
- Additional programs were added to the AgNet system for all inspection activities at BPI.
- The Pesticide Registration on-line system was rebuilt providing the industry with 24-hour access to registration and renewals.
- Updated the online pesticide registration system to ensure efficient pesticide registration for the registrants and management of registrations.
- MDAC assisted Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation with their EPA Senior Staff Agriculture Tour.
- The Certification and Training Plan was submitted to EPA Headquarters for approval.



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# Seed Program and State Seed Lab

*The Seed Program and State Seed Laboratory protect and support the seed industry and farmers through regulation and seed testing.*

The Seed Testing Laboratory provides regulatory and service seed testing to the seed industry and farmers of Mississippi. The seed lab inspects and collects samples of seed offered for sale to determine truth-in-labeling. Seed companies and farmers may submit samples of seed for testing to obtain quality and purity levels of seed. Regulatory and service tests protect and support seed companies and farmers by providing unbiased and reliable information in a timely manner. The Seed Testing Laboratory also tests all seed for the Mississippi Certified Seed Program.

- Permits issued for the sale of seed to be planted: 1,890
- Seed samples received: 16,597
- Tests conducted on seeds: 32,712
- Official regulatory seed samples collected: 3,819
- Official regulatory seed samples found to be in violation of the State Seed Law: 38
- Special tests conducted on seed such as cool germ test, accelerated aging, and chemical tests: 8,370
- Seed Lab Director currently serving as Vice-President of American Association of Official Seed Analysts.
- Working with MSU Extension Service to develop Seed Technology Short Course.
- Provided education and outreach through laboratory tours.



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# Feed, Fertilizer, Lime, and Soil Amendments

*The Feed, Fertilizer, Lime, and Soil Amendments Program protects the agriculture industry through the regulation of feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil amendment products sold in the state of Mississippi.*

Under provisions of Mississippi laws regulating feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil amendment products, the Bureau of Plant Industry carries out activities that include registering products and facilities, collecting registration and inspection fees, inspecting and sampling products for label guarantees, and assessing penalties for substandard products.

All brands and grades of fertilizer, lime and soil/plant amendment products must be registered with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce before they can be sold in the state of Mississippi. Items subject to registration include liming materials, fertilizer materials, mixed grades of fertilizer and all products sold to promote plant growth by means other than supplying a recognized plant food element, or those products applied to plants, seed, or soil to improve germination, growth, yield, product quality, reproduction, flavor, or other desirable characteristics of plants. The Bureau of Plant Industry collects reports from fertilizer, soil, and plant amendment registrants of the tonnage of materials sold in the state annually.



- Feed products registered: 20,343 products from 1,196 feed distributors
- Feed samples collected: 1,825
- Fertilizer products registered: 26,314 products from 926 fertilizer distributors
- Fertilizer samples collected: 664
- Lime products registered: 185 products from 89 distributors
- Lime samples collected: 101



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A close-up photograph of a man with dark skin and short hair, wearing a green shirt. He is looking intently at a vertical scale or measuring device. The scale has two columns of numbers, one on the left and one on the right, with a central vertical line. The numbers range from 0 to 25. The man's hand is visible, holding the scale. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with some structures.

# Regulatory Services

**Consumer Protection - Federal and State Inspection - Petroleum Inspection - Meat Inspection  
Weights and Measures - Metrology Lab - Grain Dealers and Warehouses**

***The Bureau of Regulatory Services is a regulatory bureau within the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. Its mission is to effectively and efficiently administer and enforce the laws and regulations charged to the Bureau.***

The Bureau protects the health and economic welfare of all citizens, affords a measure of economic protection which citizens cannot provide for themselves, and strives for equity in the marketplace which works to the good of all citizens of this state.

The Bureau is divided into area-specific divisions that regulate certain businesses within the state. The Bureau administers state laws and promulgates regulations to support those laws in the areas of meat inspection, retail food sanitation, labeling laws, grains, aquaculture, peanuts, petroleum, and weights and measures. The Bureau partners with multiple federal and state agencies to carry out its mission.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce launched a promotional partnership with Mississippi State University. The partnership is part of an initiative to promote universities within the state through MDAC's Bureau of Regulatory Services inspection stickers. Each division within the Bureau of Regulatory Services features the school colors of the chosen university for one year. This authorized system in the regulation of various segments of commerce informs the public when inspections were conducted as well as the contact information for MDAC's Weights and Measures Division, Consumer Protection Division, Petroleum Products Inspection Division, and State Metrology Laboratory.



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# Consumer Protection

*The Consumer Protection Division protects the interests of the general public by ensuring food quality, safety, fairness, and equity in the retail marketplace.*

The Division's goal is to protect Mississippi consumers on a daily basis by enforcing retail food safety and sanitation laws and regulations, weights and measures standards, and food labeling requirements in retail food establishments such as convenience stores and grocery stores. The Division conducts routine inspections of all retail food establishments throughout the state to ensure that food safety and sanitation regulations are being met. The Division's inspectors routinely examine meat market sanitation, ensure food is stored at appropriate temperatures, confirm the availability of hot water and soap in restrooms, and monitor stores to ensure the absence of insects and rodents.

The Consumer Protection Division Inspectors examine scales in all retail food establishments to confirm weights and measures standards for purchased items are being met. They also ensure consumers receive the quantity and quality of the goods they pay for by testing scales and UPC pricing for accuracy to make sure the consumer is not being overcharged or undersold when purchasing a product.

Consumer Protection weights and measures inspections include the following:

- Ensuring the accuracy of scales, including meat scales, deli scales, produce scales, and checkout scales.
- UPC price verification sample testing, which ensure prices on shelves match prices at checkout registers.
- Net weight package checking inspections, which ensure not only consumers are paying for only the net weight of foods, but also the correct weight is properly applied to the price of the product.



The Consumer Protection Division also enforces proper food labeling requirements through cooperative agreements and collaboration with government entities.



The Consumer Protection Division works with the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service to perform inspections of retail food establishments to ensure illegally processed meats are not sold in retail food establishments. Additionally, the Consumer Protection Division conducts Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) inspections through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Foods such as muscle cuts of meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, and unprocessed nuts must have country-of-origin declarations at the final point of sale.

# Consumer Protection

Continued

The Consumer Protection Division's food labeling responsibilities include inspection of the sale of pure honey and pure syrup. Pure honey and pure syrup label inspections are performed to ensure consumers are receiving the product as it is advertised on the labels. The Division works in collaboration with the Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi State Chemical Lab to regulate the sale of honey and syrup.



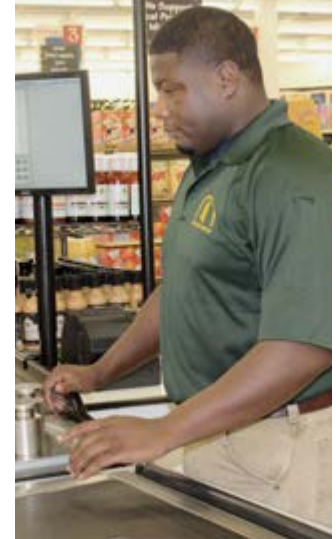
## **Catfish, Crawfish, and Shrimp**

It is essential to ensure catfish, shrimp, and crawfish being promoted as U.S. products are not being discreetly replaced with foreign substitutes. The Consumer Protection Division conducts inspections in restaurants throughout the state to prohibit retailers from selling similar foods disguised or labeled incorrectly as U.S. products.

## **Emergency Assistance**

The Consumer Protection Division has maintained a natural disaster partnership with the FDA and other state agencies in the event of natural disasters, such as hurricanes and tornadoes. In an effort to help emergency responders, the Division has mapped the GPS coordinates of all of its inspected stores.

- Retail food establishment licenses issued: 834
- Retail egg licenses issued: 68
- Mobile Vendor licenses issued: 41
- Inspections conducted:
  - Businesses inspected: 4,536
  - Retail scale inspections: 5,858
  - Retail food sanitation inspections: 2,772
  - Items for net weight inspections: 28,827
  - Disposition of garbage inspections: 2,772
  - UPC price verification inspections: 1,363
  - Shell eggs inspected: 18,200 dozen
  - Catfish/Shrimp/Crawfish Marketing inspections: 479
- USDA COOL audits conducted: 35



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# Federal and State Inspection Program

*The Federal/State Inspection Program Division provides quality inspections for produce growers as well as unbiased food safety audits.*

## **Food Safety**

This Division conducts fruit and vegetable inspections as well as third party food safety audits known as Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) audits. All inspections and food safety audits are provided statewide to farms, packers, and wholesalers.

The GAP/GHP audits are voluntary, independent audits of produce suppliers throughout the production and supply chain. GAP/GHP audits focus on best agricultural practices to verify that fruits and vegetables are produced, packed, handled, and stored in the safest manner possible to minimize risks of microbial food safety hazards. The audits verify adherence to the recommendations made in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* and industry recognized food safety practices.



Farmer Stock Peanuts must be inspected, and a grade issued per lot for the farmer to receive payment at the point of sale. The Federal/State Inspection Program Division grades the peanuts brought to buying points in the state.

- USDA GAP/GHP food safety audits conducted: 76
- Peanuts graded: 25,695 tons

## **Produce Safety**

*The Produce Safety Division provides food safety assurance for consumers of fresh fruit and vegetables which are grown in Mississippi*

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce's Produce Safety Division implements the Produce Safety Rule in Mississippi. It also provides Outreach and On Farm Readiness Reviews to farmers prior to an operation having an inspection. The outreach team works to increase awareness of the Produce Safety Rule as well as help growers prepare their operations for compliance. Most outreach services, except for our required training, are free to growers in Mississippi.

- New farms identified: 17
- Inspections at identified farms performed: 33
- On Farm Readiness Reviews provided: 4
- Educational farm visits to growers performed: 50
- Produce Safety Alliance Grower trainings in conjunction with MSU: 6
- Developed Produce Safety Division publications for grower education.
- Promoted the Produce Safety rule at over seven meetings and workshops statewide.



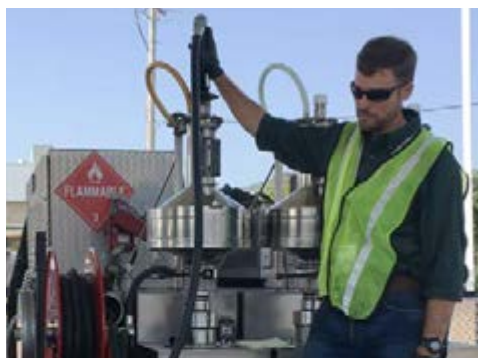
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# Petroleum Inspection

*The Petroleum Products Inspection Division regulates the motor fuel sold in Mississippi to ensure that those who purchase petroleum products and motor fuels get what they pay for in terms of quality and quantity.*

All petroleum products sold in the state must be registered with MDAC's Petroleum Products Inspection Division. All retail motor fuel products which include gasoline, ethanol blended fuel, diesel fuel, biodiesel blended fuel, and kerosene, are analyzed by the Mississippi State Chemical Lab to ensure product compliance within American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) specifications. Analysis includes tests for octane number, alcohol content, diesel flash point, biodiesel content, and the presence of water in fuel.

The Division regulates approximately 2.3 billion gallons of fuel consumed by Mississippians and visitors to the state and conducts annual inspections of the Retail Motor-Fuel Dispensers (RMFD), commonly known as gas pumps, to ensure compliance with all laws and regulations. These inspections consist of ensuring the accuracy of RMFDs, testing for the presence of water, checking signage to ensure that the proper price is displayed on all signs, and checking the quality of the fuel to ensure proper product designations. Violations are issued for equipment found to be noncompliant with the petroleum law. Petroleum equipment repairmen are required to obtain a license from MDAC and report all adjusted devices to the Division.



- Registered fuel distributors: 222
- Petroleum equipment repairmen licensed: 432
- Registered devices inspected: 57,745 devices at 2,657 retail establishments
- Fuel samples obtained: 1,822
- Total individual devices tested: 63,178
- Consumer complaints responded to within 24 hours: 223
- Percent of the complaints for noncompliance wherein corrective action was taken: 32%
- Stop sales enforced:
  - 224 fuel quality violations
  - 170 calibration violations
  - 460 sign violations
  - 143 water violations

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# Meat Inspection

*The Meat Inspection Division provides food safety assurance to consumers of meat and poultry food products.*

The Meat Inspection Division provides inspection services to establishments which prepare meat and poultry food products for entry into intrastate commerce and to some establishments which engage in interstate commerce. The Division inspects all establishments engaged in the slaughtering of food animals and poultry, except for those plants operating under federal inspection. The Division also inspects the further processing of meat, meat-food products, poultry, and poultry food products and their preparation for consumer items. These products are also inspected throughout formulation, packaging, labeling, and distribution to retail outlets. This assurance is becoming more critical as more food products are intended to be consumed with little or no further preparation at home.

MDAC has a cooperative agreement with the USDA establishing a meat and poultry inspection system that is equal to the federal inspection system. In addition, MDAC has cooperative agreements for the Talmadge-Aiken Program (TA), which permits state employees to provide inspections at federal meat plants as well as the Compliance and Investigation Division Program (CID), which gives authority to inspect businesses that handle meat and poultry for law compliance.

- Pounds of red meat inspected: 31.4 million
- Pounds of poultry inspected: 64.2 million
- Other inspections: 8,288 rabbits and 9,415 quail
- State meat plant licenses issued: 29
- Meat plants inspected through the Talmadge-Aiken program: 27
- Rendering companies licensed: 9



Director  
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# Weights and Measures

*The Weights and Measures Division regulates the use of weighing and measuring devices used in commerce to ensure consumers are treated fairly in the marketplace.*

The Weights and Measures Division inspects and tests scales and measurement equipment used in commerce to ensure compliance with state laws and equity in the marketplace. Division inspectors make routine inspections on all types of commercial weighing devices including railroad scales, vehicle scales, livestock scales, hopper scales, floor scales, bench scales, and those used to weigh precious metals and stones like gold, silver, and diamonds. Inspectors conduct package inspections to verify the net contents of packaged commodities and price verification inspections in businesses that utilize UPC scanning systems. The Division also investigates complaints involving weighing and measuring devices.

The Division also licenses livestock facilities, livestock auctioneers, pulpwood facilities, bonded weighmasters, scale service companies, and repairmen that install and repair weighing or measuring devices within the state of Mississippi.

## Moisture Meter Testing Laboratory

The Mississippi Moisture Meter Laboratory provides testing and inspection of devices used to measure the moisture content of agricultural products offered for sale, processed, or stored, using standard methods set by the USDA. The Moisture Meter Laboratory also compiles grain standards used in the inspection of grain moisture meters tested in the state. The laboratory is located in Sardis, Mississippi.

- Active scales: 4,484
- Heavy capacity scales inspected: 933
- Intermediate scales inspected: 4,702
- Railway scales inspected: 44
- Livestock scales inspected: 175
- Dairy farm milk tanks calibrated: 18
- Weighmaster inspections conducted: 56
- Pulpwood/timber inspections conducted: 20
- UPC inspections conducted: 29
- Oven tests conducted: 120 (Corn 31, Rice 19, Wheat 39, Soybeans 31)
- Moisture meter tests conducted: 320



Director  
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# Metrology Lab

*The Mississippi Metrology Laboratory tests, calibrates, and certifies measuring devices used in commerce for accuracy.*

The Mississippi Metrology Laboratory tests, calibrates, and certifies weighing and measuring artifacts used to test commercial devices for accuracy by industry and state regulatory officials.

The Regulatory Services Bureau maintains the Mississippi Metrology Laboratory located in Lorman on the campus of Alcorn State University. The lab is accredited for the testing of mass and volume by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). The accreditation allows the Lab to provide certification and calibration services for government, commercial businesses, and private entities. This certification allows registered service agents and MDAC to test all weighing and measuring devices for accuracy used in commerce.



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# Grain Dealers and Warehouses

*MDAC's Bureau of Regulatory Services licenses grain dealers and grain warehouses in the state of Mississippi.*

Mississippi law requires grain dealers and grain warehouses be licensed by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, unless they hold a license from the federal government.

The Mississippi Grain Dealers Law requires dealers who purchase grain directly from producers to be licensed and bonded. Operations or individuals who are not licensed are prohibited by law from purchasing grain from producers.

Warehouses that store grain for the public in Mississippi are required to be licensed pursuant to the Grain Warehouse Law, unless the warehouse is licensed under the United States Warehouse Act. Grain warehousemen must be bonded for financial and storage obligations, and they must maintain sufficient assets to cover potential losses. Bonding requirements of the law range from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$1 million.

- Grain dealers licensed: 42
- Grain warehouses licensed: 10



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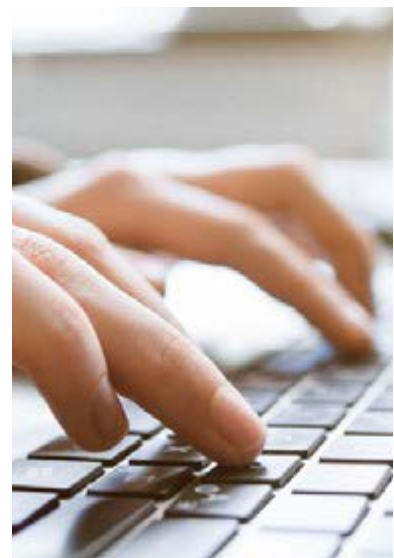
# Information Management

*The Information Management Division provides information technology services to MDAC staff.*

The Information Management Division (IMD) provides information technology and services to all employees of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce as well as provides technical and network support, application development and systems support, and strategic planning services for both MDAC and the Mississippi Board of Animal Health.

IMD plays a critical role in aligning information technology with the agency's business goals, providing the infrastructure resources to support the agency's communication and decision making, and exploring emerging technologies to promote agriculture and commerce in the state.

- Agency Help Desk tickets resolved: 1,071
- Installed new Lenovo desktop computers for all MDAC office employees.
- Provided GIS services for timber, agriculture transportation, Wild Hog Program, and various other mapping applications.
- Updates to Agnet Operations:
  - Created modern Pesticide Registration System for BPI.
  - Added Cogongrass and Sweet Potato programs to BPI automation.
  - Expanded licensing/certification systems.
  - Expanded WIC system to include USDA changes.
  - Created system to allow submission and tracking of scholarship applications.
- Created MDAC Photos and Videos SharePoint site to store multimedia content for cataloging and sharing digital media.
- Designed and created new websites for Mississippi Board of Animal Health (MBAH), Mississippi State Fairgrounds, Mississippi State Fair, Dixie National Rodeo, and High Pathology Avian Influenza (HPAI).
- Integrated new contract database to new Fairgrounds website to continuously update current events displayed to public.
- Setup MDAC International Trade Office in the Bolton Building onto MDAC network and MDAC Guest wireless.
- Upgraded the Farmers Market fiber connection from radio wave for more robust network connectivity and MDAC-Guest wireless replacing Comcast.
- Converted to 1GB fiber connection for MDAC Guest Wireless General for Store at the Ag Museum.



# Information Management Continued



- Developed MBAH application to track voluntary entry system for identification of Premises.
- Developed MBAH avian permit system.
- Developed application to connect Mississippi Food Banks with farmers and distributors.
- Worked with ITS to improve department's fiber speeds from 1GB to 10GB.
- Upgraded to new firewall and VPN for improved and faster Internet connectivity for remote users.
- Established new guest wireless connection at BPI.
- Established faster WAN connections from MDAC Main to Metrology and BPI in conjunction with ITS RFP 5000 program at no additional cost to MDAC.

## Provided the following Drone and Multimedia coverage:

- Near instant maps for events at Fairgrounds including Jackson water crisis, Dixie National Rodeo, and Mississippi State Fair as well as near empty campus.
- Documentation of Jackson water distribution at Fairgrounds and historic low water levels of Mississippi River.
- Support of marketing publications by providing aerial data of lumber processing, dairy, beef, and fruit farms.
- Aerial data for Wild Hog Control Program of pastureland destroyed by rooting hogs.
- Photography services for Heartland Catfish Farm Tours.
- Genuine MS® product photography for online store.
- Photography for Egg Marketing Board annual Legislative omelet lunch.
- Photographic coverage of International Timber Trade Tours.
- Photography for National Agriculture Day signing.
- Photography and video services for various Museum and Fairgrounds events.



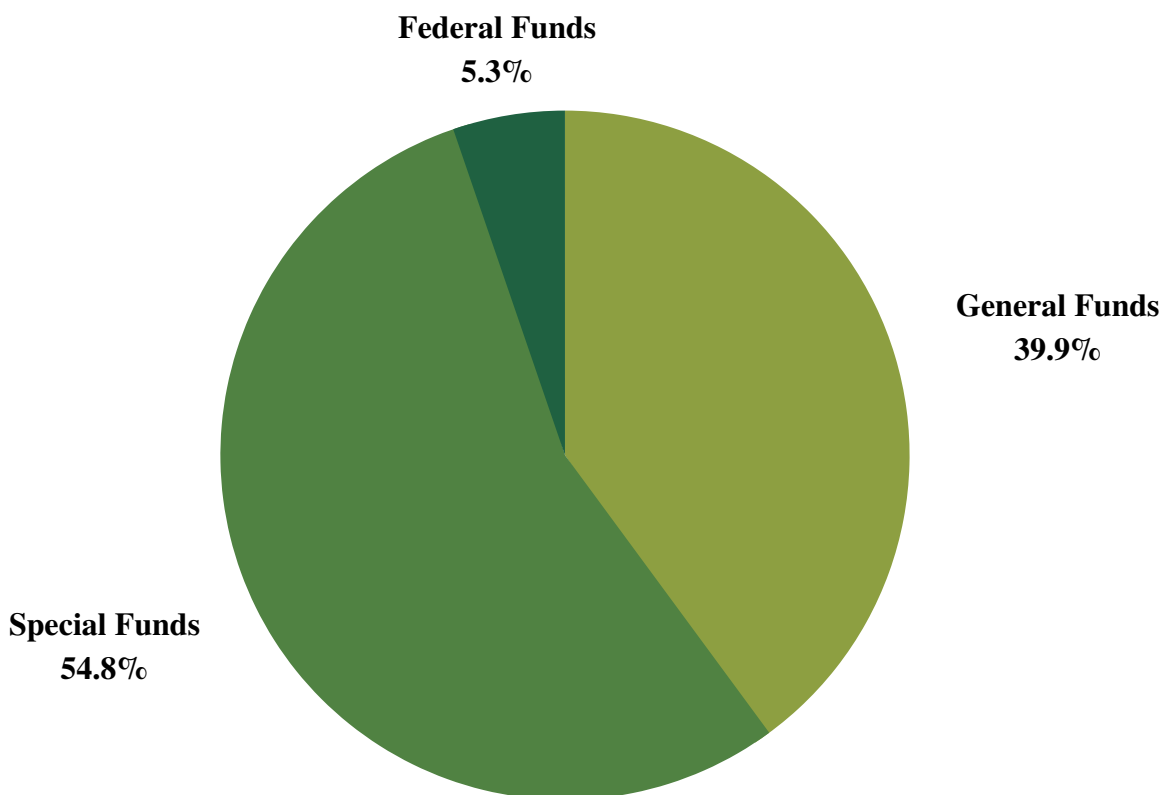
Director  
Jason Price  
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# Revenues and Expenditures

**Total Revenue: \$20,046,828**

## Sources of Revenue



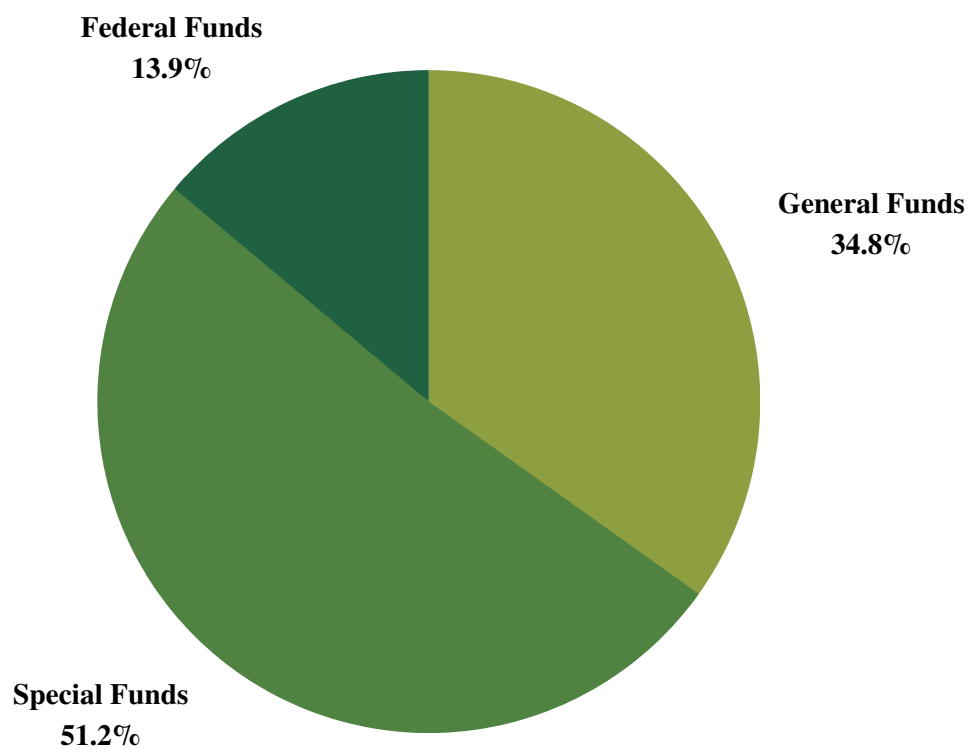
General Funds	\$7,998,944	39.9%
Special Funds	\$10,993,996	54.8%
Federal Funds	\$1,053,888	5.3%

# Revenues and Expenditures

Continued

**Total Expenditures: \$22,786,431**

## **Classification of Expenditures by Funding Source**

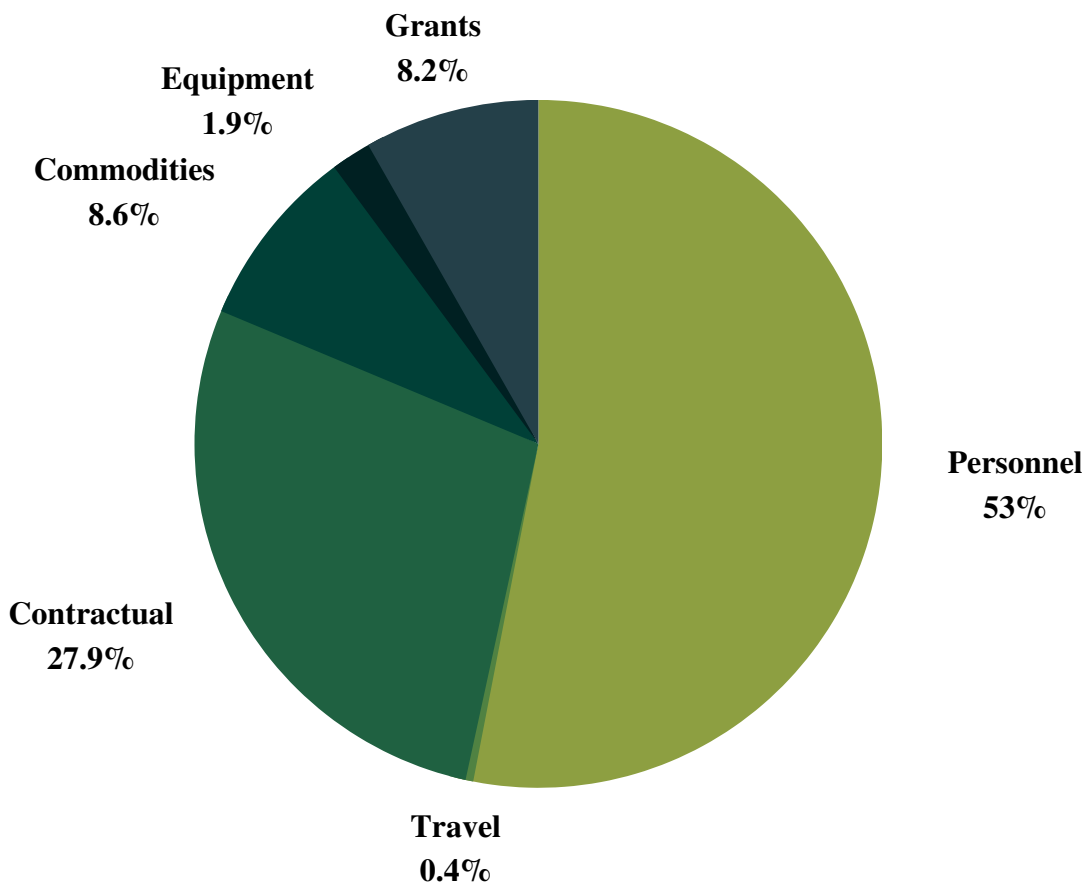


General Funds	\$7,940,817	34.8%
Special Funds	\$11,678,035	51.2%
Federal Funds	\$3,167,579	13.9%



**Expenditures: \$22,786,431**

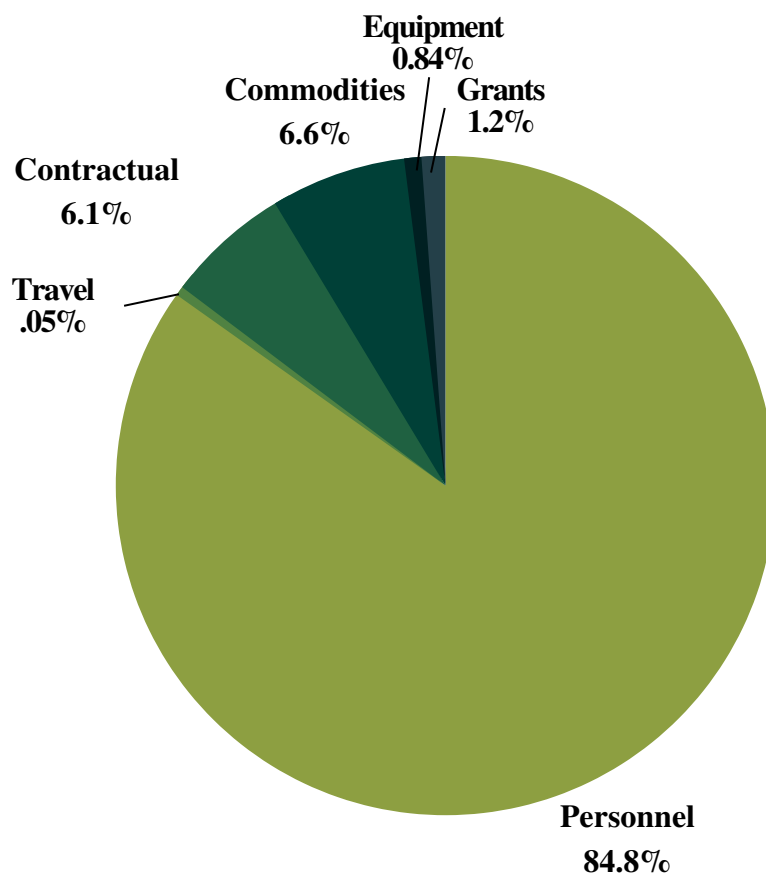
## Classification of Expenditures by Expense Categories



Personnel	\$12,085,603	53%
Travel	\$82,279	0.4%
Contractual	\$6,359,031	27.9%
Commodities	\$1,952,689	8.6%
Equipment	\$429,043	1.9%
Grants	\$1,877,786	8.2%

## General Fund Expenditures: \$7,940,817

### Classification of Expenditures by Expense Categories



Personnel	\$6,735,448	84.8%
Travel	\$36,299	.05%
Contractual	\$482,167	6.1%
Commodities	\$527,491	6.6%
Equipment	\$66,972	0.84%
Grants	\$92,440	1.2%

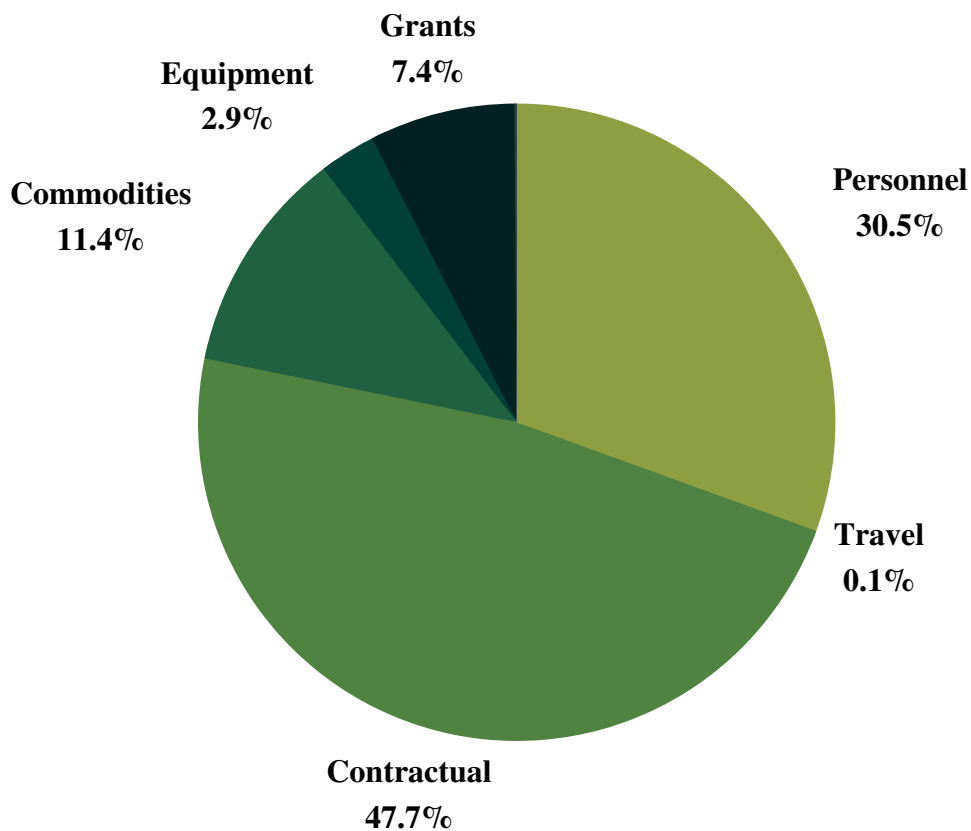


# Revenues and Expenditures

Continued

**Special Fund Expenditures: \$11,678,035**

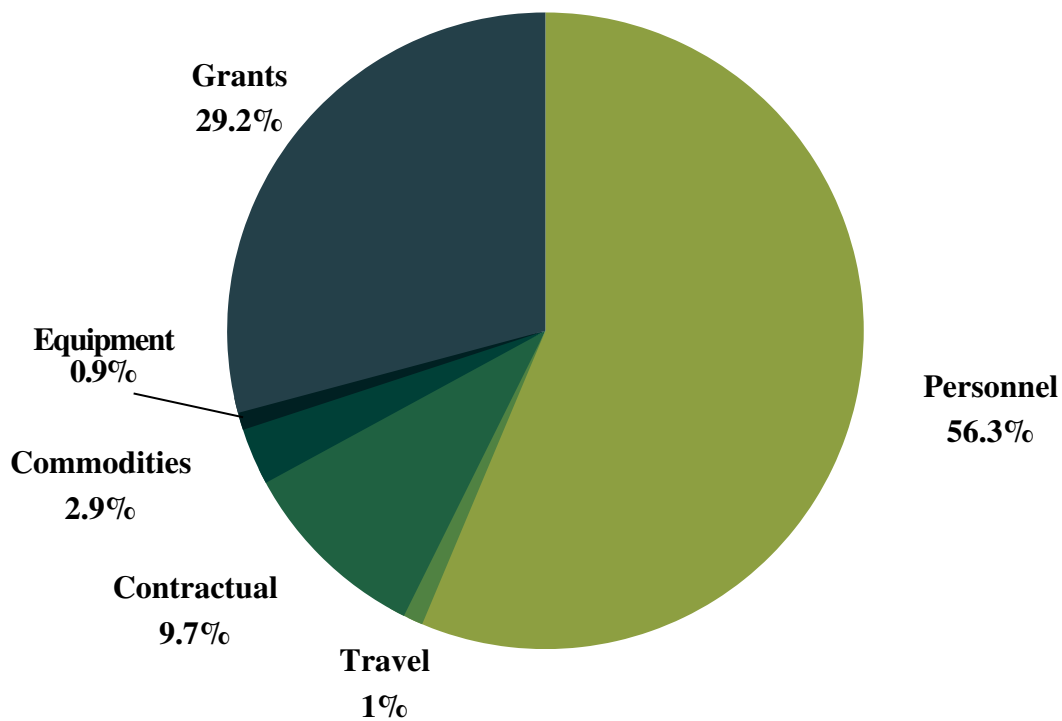
## Classification of Expenditures by Expense Categories



Personnel	\$3,565,855	30.5%
Travel	\$14,167	0.1%
Contractual	\$5,568,416	47.7%
Commodities	\$1,333,646	11.4%
Equipment	\$334,087	2.9%
Grants	\$861,864	7.4%

## Federal Fund Expenditures: \$3,167,579

### Classification of Expenditures by Expense Categories



Personnel	\$1,784,300	56.3%
Travel	\$31,813	1%
Contractual	\$308,448	9.7%
Commodities	\$91,552	2.9%
Equipment	\$27,984	0.9%
Grants	\$923,482	29.2%

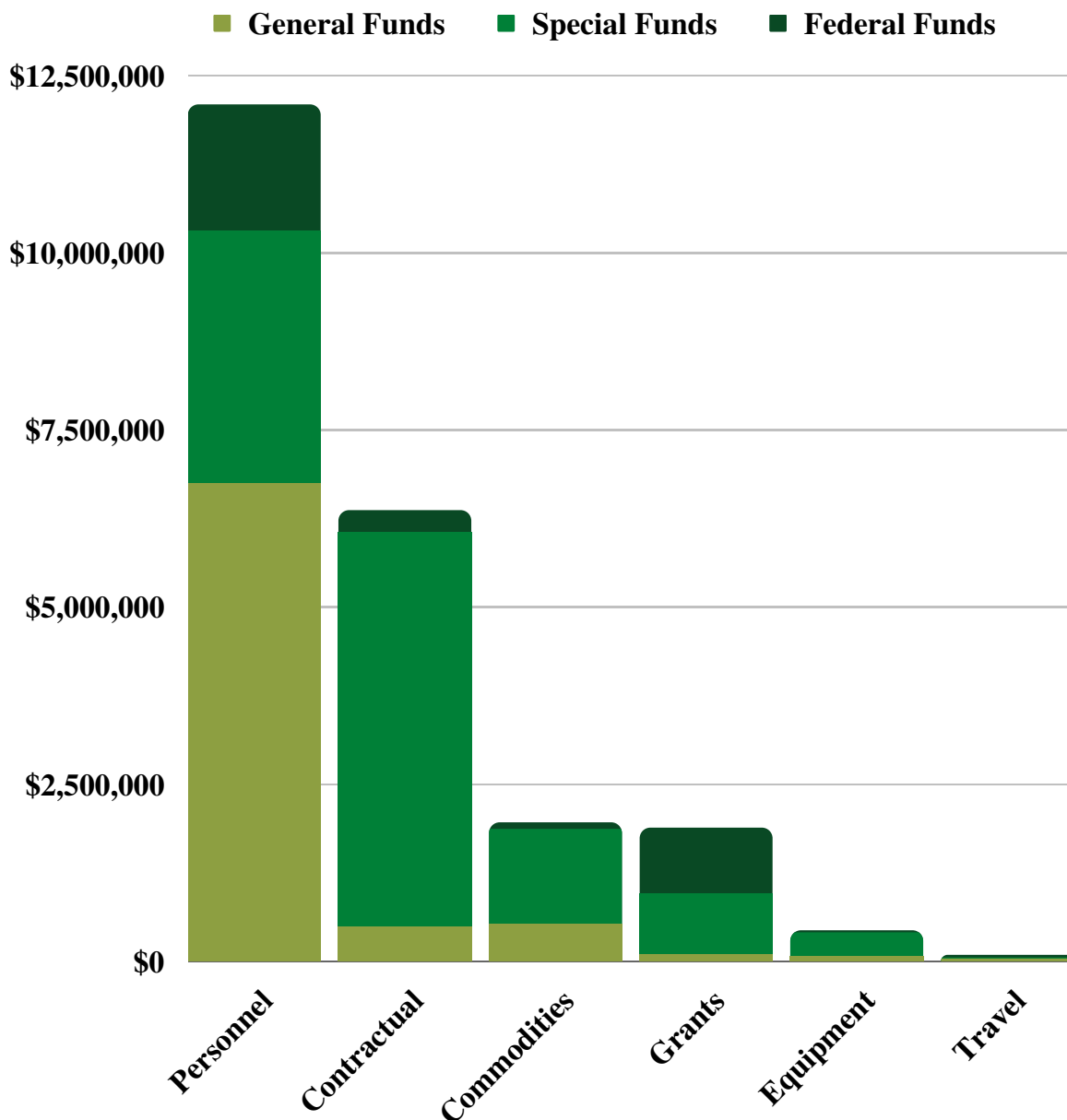


# Revenues and Expenditures

Continued

**Expenditures: \$22,786,431**

## Classification of Expenditures by Expense Categories



# Growing A Better Tomorrow

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF  
**AGRICULTURE  
& COMMERCE**

Andy Gipson, Commissioner



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